

Camp Buckner's Neck
Feb. 23d, 1863

Dear father,

Your favor of the 17th, inst is at hand, am glad to know all are well. Shultz, I suppose has arrived home safely, he has been gone just a week & has given you all the news. The deepest snow of the winter fell last Saturday night & Sunday morning & it has been extremely cold since then. The roads continue almost impassable & if this snow melts rapidly they will become quite so. Commissary stores are being packed from the depot on horses & mules – forage is hauled 75 miles – takes 6 horses to pull 8 or 900 lbs straw, hay or corn. I am really glad to hear of our army of the valley leaving the neighborhood of N. M. suppose Jones thinks his advance to Edinburg a daring feat. Our army has been almost idle since the Fredericksburg fight – except putting up shantees, & building roads & digging trenches there has been little moving. Every thing is consumed in the way of provender, meat &c. & the whole country along the Rappahannoc for miles laid a waist. Many farms of 500 & 1000 acres have had every fence burnt & all the timber. They will have to plant hedges and dig ditches. Boards of survey have been established & damages assessed. The damages on one farm was put at \$17,000, I was told by one of the board. They will now be at a great loss to supply its place. Lands here must

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fall in price. The lands along the Rappahannoc are beautiful the subsoil is to light to be very durable. The first growth of timber has mostly been cut off – so that [pine] is their only dependence in the form of timber. I do not admire the general appearance of the country. If I were permitted I would prefer spending my days in the Valley.

Several divisions of this army have moved toward Richmond, some say to the south, others say towards Norfolk. I think this is the best evidence we have that the enemy have moved a considerable force in front of us. They have built quite a number of roads across the river bottoms to the bank of the river apparently preparing to cross. It is not at all probable that they will attempt to cross in front of us again. When the roads get better they may cross far above at Fredericksburg or they may give up this route entirely. If so we may be moved

toward Norfolk or the South.

The probability of Clark Cty. being evacuated by the enemy at an early date is not very great. They will not leave if Jones is to drive them. I think it would be best to make arrangements to invest your funds about Staunton, if you can do so. Rupe has been harping at a settlement for years, if he is as anxious as he has always seemed to be he should exert himself now. He has more time than any one else. As far as I am concerned I can not do any thing. I am tied down for the war, and subject to its despotic government, where there are no favors given.

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I am not surprised to hear of Charles Coiner's capture. He went on a scout with Capt. Mosbey – a very daring, reckless fellow. He will not be kept long, I suppose – I thought John Henkel had gone to Richmond to have the operation performed on his throat. The polypus can not be a large one if it is so difficult to come at.

This snow will detain Mr. Bell I suppose. I would like for Shultz to bring my boots at least, as I am much in need of them. When Mr. Bell comes perhaps he could bring a box for us. I would pay him almost any price.

We are faring rather hard in the way of edibles, but all keep well on it so far. We are paying \$1.00 lb for bacon, \$1.25 for sugar \$3. doz for apples \$1 ½ - \$2. for butter, 25 cts ps. for candles

Dr Dailey has been transferred to Hospital duty at Lexington

Dr Jordan of Mt. Jackson is also transferred. Surgeons are leaving the field whenever they can. I fear I shall have to remain in the field all the time, as I generally am left to bear the blunts. One consolation, field service is considered the most honourable position, if its duties are more onerous, and the opportunity of seeing operative surgery is far superior.

I do wish Shultz could remain at home to prevent all the out door practice getting into other hands. I suppose we will have to commence anew when we get home.

Remember me to all the folks. Please write whenever convenient to.

Your son

Caspar C